Substitute Scans

presents

Aoki Ao no Atopos

by Yamamura Hajime

chapter 3

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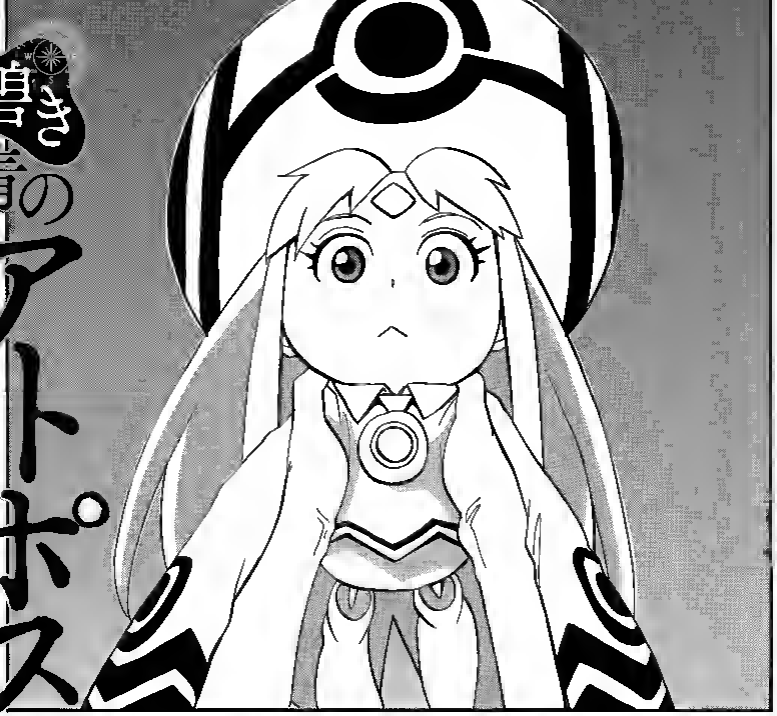


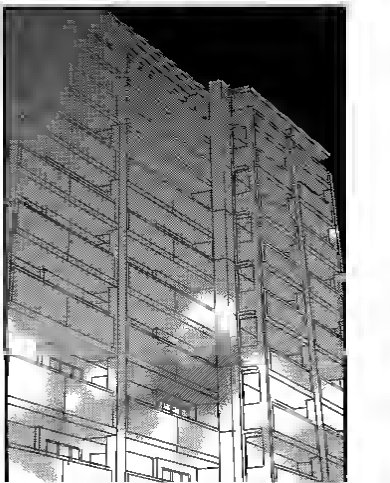
SEG.3 - RESOLUTION

HAJIME YAMAMURA

BROUGHT TO YOU BY SUBSTITUTE SCANS
UWAAH! SHE VANISHED!
SO SHE CAN'T STAY MATERIALIZED MORE THAN 2 METERS FROM UTOU...

THE LEGACY OF AN ANCIENT CIVILI-ZATION?
SO THIS THING IS...
THINK OF IT LIKE FOCUSING A LENS ON AN OBJECT. IN THIS CASE, THAT CREST ON YOU IS THE LENS.
WHY IS THAT?
YEAH.
YOU FOUND HER ON THE SUNKEN ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC?

IN OTHER WORDS..



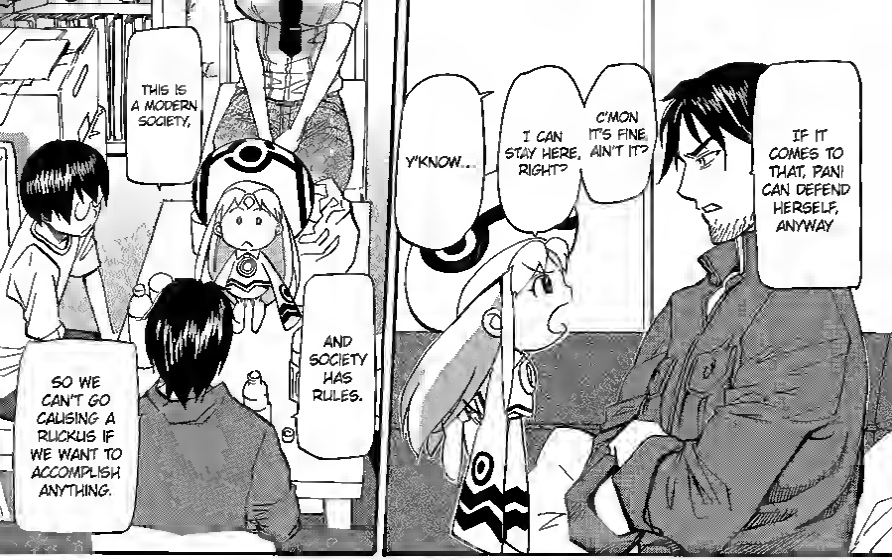
SO... LIKE THE CONTINENT OF MU, BUT IN THE PACIFIC?
THAT WAS JUST AN OCCULT TALE WRITTEN BY AN AMERICAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE LAST CENTURY.
THE RESEARCH GROUP TRIP'S GOAL WAS THE RUINS ON THIS SUNKEN ISLAND?
THE ISLAND OF PROTO LIES DORMANT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, EVEN NOW.
BUT THIS ONE ACTUALLY EXISTED
WHO ARE THE RESEARCH GROUP MEMBERS, ANYWAY?
A PROJECT OF THIS SCALE WOULD REQUIRE A FOUNDATION
HOW DID THE RESEARCH GROUP PUT THIS INTO ACTION?
SUBMARINE INVESTI-GATIONS ARE EXPENSIVE.

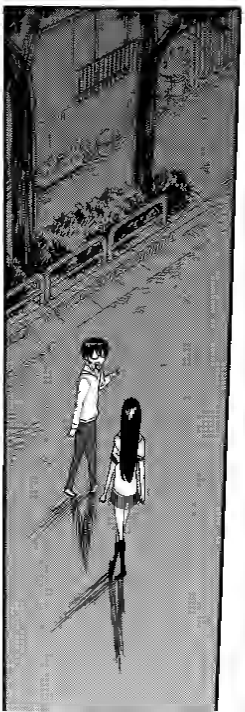
WHAT ABOUT YOU? DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING FROM YOUR BROTHER?
NO, HE ONLY TOLD ME THAT HE WORKS FOR THIS RESEARCH INSTITUTE.
I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS.
MY COMPANY'S FINANCER, THE TAKEBA GROUP REQUESTED THE RESEARCH...
THE SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH WAS TOP SECRET. ONLY THE HIGHER-UPS KNOW ABOUT IT.
ANYWAY,
THOSE GUYS ARE ON THE ISLAND,
AND AIM TO TAKE THE ANCIENT CIVILIZATION'S LEGACY FOR THEMSELVES.
DO YOU KNOW WHY..?
I DON'T BUT, LOOKING AT HOW THEY DO THINGS,
THEY'RE UP TO NO GOOD.

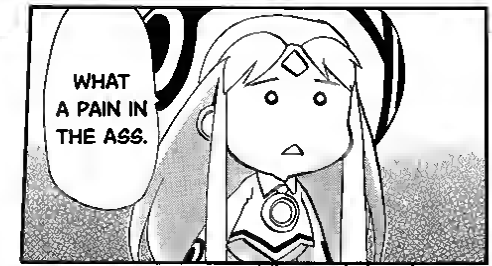
I MANAGED TO FIND AN OPENING AND RAN AWAY WITH PANI'S HELP
YEAH, WE CREWMEN WERE FORCED TO SERVE AS WORKERS AND MAKE THE ISLAND HABITABLE
THEY'RE KEEPING THE SAILORS PRISONER, TOO ..
I WORKED LIKE A COMPASS!
YUP! THESE THINGS ARE CALLED TAROA, THEY MULTIPLY THE USER'S STRENGTH!
WITH THAT SUIT YOU HAD ON?
THANKS TO THAT, I SWAM BACK TO JAPAN IN 3 DAYS
IT DID TIRE ME OUT, YOU KNOW.
WITH THAT OUTFIT?! FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE PACI-FIC?!
YOU SWAM BACK ?!
AND IT LEFT ME FAMISHED.

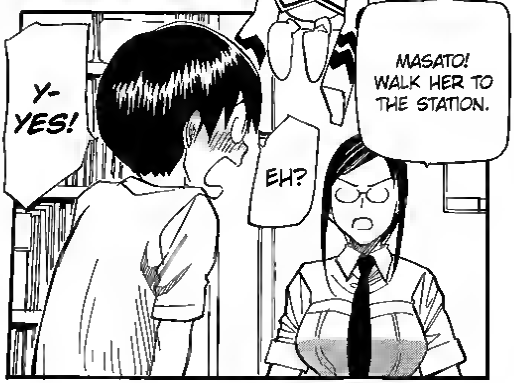
SO THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO KILL PEOPLE NONCHALANTLY.
DON'T WORRY, THEY CAN'T KEEP THE ISLAND RUNNING BY THEMSELVES.
WAS IT ALRIGHT TO ESCAPE BY YOURSELF? WON'T THIS ENDANGER THE OTHERS?
SO IT CAN'T FLY?
GUESS THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED.
THAT'S A RELIEF.
OH! LOOK AT THE TIME.

I KNOW WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF EXPLAINING THINGS, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO GO HOME, DON'T YOU, MS. LITOU?
I DO, BUT...
HM?
C'MON IT'S REAAALLY EMB/R-RASSING.
DON'T STARE AT ME LIKE THAT.
WILL IT BE ALRIGHT? WHAT IF THEY COME FOR US AGAIN ..?
HM?
DON'T FRET OVER IT.
THEY CAN'T FIND US HERE SO EASILY.
WE'RE PROBABLY SAFE FOR NOW.


IF IT COMES TO THAT, PAN! CAN DEFEND HERSELF, ANYWAY
C'MON IT'S FINE, AIN'T IT?
I CAN STAY HERE, RIGHT?
Y'KNOW...
THIS IS A MODERN SOCIETY,
AND SOCIETY HAS RULES.
SO WE CAN'T GO CAUSING A RUCKUS IF WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.




WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS.


MASATO! WALK HER TO THE STATION.
EH?
Y-YES!

AL-RIGHT.
I'LL LET YOU STAY HERE FOR A WHILE.
LIKE YOU ASKED...
CLICK
I DON'T THINK GOING TO THE COMPANY IS A GOOD IDEA.
WITH WHAT THE RESEARCH GROUP DID TO THE SAILORS, IT'S HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THE COMPANY'S TOP BRASS IS INVOLVED IN THIS
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
ONCE PANI AND I LEAVE, JUST FORGET ABOUT EVERY-THING

AS IF I COULD.
YOU GOT THAT GIRL MIXED UP IN THIS, TOO...
YEAH.
IT'S MY FAULT SHE'S INVOLVED.
BUT I'LL GIVE IT MY ALL.
THANKFULLY, SHE'S PRETTY CALM ABOUT IT ALL.
KIND OF STRANGE.
SHE ISN'T PHASED BY IT AT ALL
LITOU'S SISTER..?
OH, YEAH
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO ASK
YOU AND THAT FAIRY...
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO...?

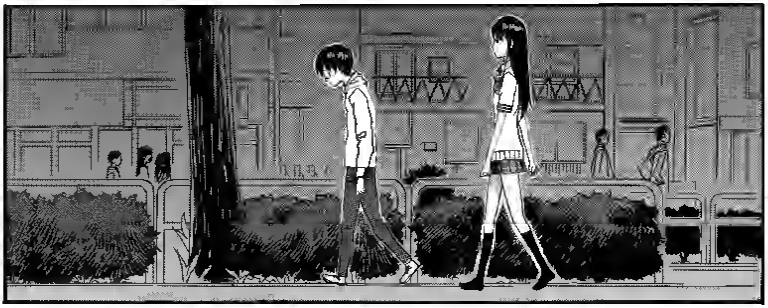
HE DID SWIM HERE FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN
GUESS I CAN'T BLAME HIM.

THIS
DOESN'T FEEL REAL.
JUST ME
AND A GIRL I MET TODAY
WALKING DOWN THE STREET,
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT
HEY,
YOU!

MY STOM-ACH!
SHE CAME OUT OF MY STOM-ACH?!
2 METERS. 2 METERS.
NOT VERY FAR, IS IT?
AAAA
PAY ATTENTION!
YOU ALMOST RAN INTO THIS!
THIS POLE!
...OH.
YEAH.
HOW PROBLEMA-TIC FOR YOU. BEING STUCK WITH THIS
.....
YEAH.
WHAT'S THAT?!
WHY STARTING SOMETH-ING?!

DO YOU REALLY NEED TO GO TO THE ISLAND
TO SEPARATE YOU TWO?
THERE'S NO OTHER OPTION.
SHE'LL HAVE TO COME WITH US FROM NOW ON.
THAT'S CRAZY! WHAT ABOUT HER FAMILY? OR SCHOOL?!
LIKE I GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT THAT
TO ACCOMPLISH OUR OBJECTIVE...
AND WHAT'S THIS OBJECTIVE?!
I CAN'T TELL IT TO UNINVOLVED THIRD PARTIES.
HOW AM I UNINVOLVED?!

YOU LOOK USELESS, SO
I'LL LET YOU OFF WITH A WARNING.
HAD ENOUGH YET?!
YOU WENT TOO FAR!!
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?!
KEEP YOUR NOSE OUT OF OUR BUSINESS..
OR IT'LL KILL YOU.



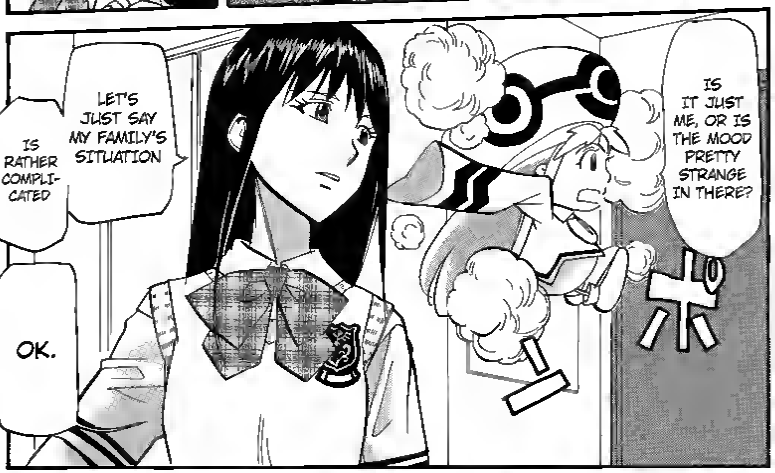
I'LL BE FINE FROM HERE.
THANKS FOR SEEING ME OFF.
THE STATION IS OVER HERE.
AH!
YEAH!
八英語教室

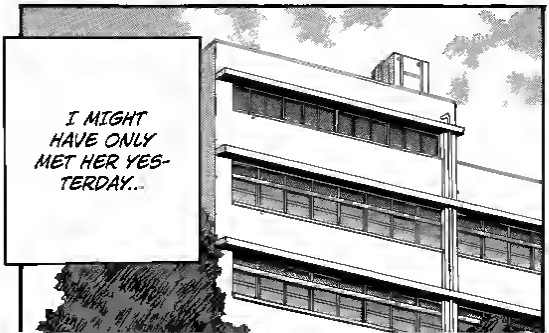
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T INVOLVE YOURSELF IN THIS ANY FURTHER
PANI WAS RIGHT
HUH?
THERE'S TOO MUCH GOING ON,
I CAN'T KEEP IT STRAIGHT
HONES-TLY,

I WISH I COULD JUST
FORGET ABOUT IT ALL
BUT WITH ALL I'VE SEEN,
HOW COULD I?
BE-SIDES,
I ONLY MET HER THIS MOR-NING...

I'M HOME
KAGARI! YOU SHOULD LET US KNOW IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET HOME LATE!
SORRY
THERE WAS SO MUCH GOING ON, I COULDN'T CALL BEFORE I GOT ON THE TRAIN.
DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING ABOUT THE SHIP'S INVESTIGATION?
IT TOOK A WHILE, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S BEEN NO PROGRESS YET.
REALLY? THAT'S A SHAME.
IT IS.
I TOLD YOU SO, RIGHT?
WELL, IT'S PRETTY LATE.
HURRY UP TO BED.
OKAY.
YOU SHOULD JUST LEAVE THESE THINGS TO THE EXPERTS!

YOU CAN COME OUT NOW.
I'M SORRY, DARLING WHEN IT COMES TO CHIAKI ..
STOP THAT.
WE'RE FAMILY, AREN'T WE?


IS IT JUST ME, OR IS THE MOOD PRETTY STRANGE IN THERE?
LET'S JUST SAY MY FAMILY'S SITUATION IS RATHER COMPLI-CATED
OK.


I MIGHT HAVE ONLY MET HER YES-TERDAY...

BUT NOW SHE'S ON MY MIND SO MUCH.
THAT WHEN-EVER SHE'S AROUND,
MY GAZE IS DRAWN TO HER.
I GUESS SHE'S NOT ATHLETIC?
QUIT SPACING OUT!
RUN, RUN!

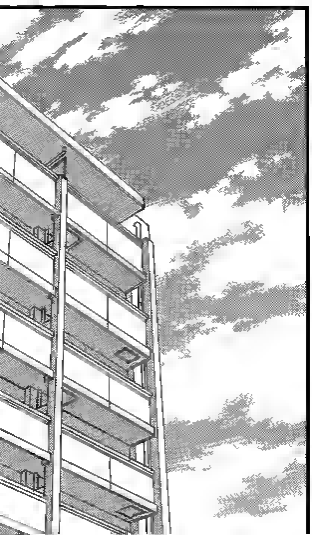
I WONDER HOW SHE'S HOLDING UP?
SHE'S SUDDENLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS WEIRD SITUATION.
SHIROHARA, WATCH OUT FOR THE BALL!!
HUH?
AH, IT FINALLY STOPPED.
THE ATHLETICS CLUB GUYS DON'T KNOW HOW TO HOLD BACK
BZZZZZ
!
HM? SIS?
TELL MS. UTOU TO COME TO OUR PLACE TOMORROW SATURDAY AT 10:00AM

WHAT IS IT?
!
THUNK
MY SISTER SENT ME AN E-MAIL
SHE WANTS YOU TO COME TO OUR PLACE TOMORROW, TO GO SOMEWHERE WITH HER.
WHERE WILL WE BE GOING?
NO IDEA. SHE DIDN'T SAY IN THE E-MAIL.
YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK MR. HITAKI.

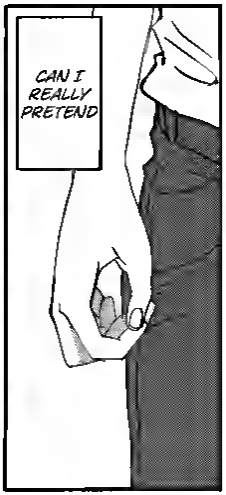
DO YOU KNOW?
MAAA AYBE.
HE SAID HE KNEW SOMEONE THAT COULD HELP.
SO WE'LL PROBABLY GO THERE.
HM?
I DIDN'T SEE!
I DIDN'T SEE ANY-THING!
WHAT'S WRONG?
THANKS FOR LET-TING ME KNOW
I FORGOT TO GIVE YOUR SISTER MY CON-TACT INFORMA-TION LAST NIGHT.
L-LOOKS LIKE YOU DID
YOU'RE SAYING YOU DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING, BUT HIDING YOUR EARS? YOU CAN STILL HEAR, TOO! WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS?
SEE YOU LATER
.....
THAT'S RIGHT.

EVEN IF I COULD FORGET ABOUT IT,
WHILE HE'S STILL AT MY PLACE,
WHILE MY SISTER IS STILL INVOLVED,
WHETHER I LIKE IT OR NOT,
I'LL STILL BE HEARING ABOUT HER.

WHAT CAN I DO?
ANYWAY,



LIKE I'D NEVER SEEN ANY OF THIS?


CAN I REALLY PRETEND

OKAY.
THEN,
LET'S GET GOING.
YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD ME WHERE WE'RE GOING!
THIS'LL BE A LONG TRIP.
OH, BEFORE THAT!
WHAT NOW?

I MAKE IT A POLICY TO NOT GET PEOPLE NEEDLESSLY INVOLVED
THEN WHAT ABOUT MS UTOU AND MY SISTER?
MASATO
WHY NOT?!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I'M GOING WITH YOU
NOPE.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M SAYING I CAN'T GET ANYONE ELSE INVOLVED.
I CAN'T LOOK AFTER ALL OF YOU.

I DON'T NEED YOU TO LOOK AFTER ME!
MASATO, THAT'S ENOUGH!
I DIDN'T EVEN PLAN TO BRING YOU ALONG
YOU'D SAY THAT TO YOUR LITTLE BROTHER?!
THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY NOW.
W-WELL WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL?!
HUH?
WHAT IF MS. UTOU IS TARGETED AT SCHOOL?!
THAT FAIRY CAN'T PROTECT HER ALONE, RIGHT?!
YOU CAN'T WATCH HER ALL THE TIME, RIGHT?
SO YOU'RE SAYING IT'S ALL GOOD WITH YOU AROUND?

I-I COULD AT LEAST CONTACT YOU, RIGHT?
LIKE IF SHE COULDN'T HERSELF...
SO...
THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE WORKING SO HARD ON LAST NIGHT?
THIS IS WHAT YOU CAME UP WITH TO GET YOURSELF INCLUDED?
SFX: ARGH – URGH
Y-YEAH,
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
DING DONG
GOOD MORNING
'SUUUP.

LET'S GO!
IT'S NOTHING
NAH,
?
SOME-THING WRONG?
GRAB
WAIT, HITAKI!
HE'S COMING WITH US?
LET'S HOPE YOU DON'T REGRET THIS.
MASATO SHIROHARA.

OF COURSE!
YES...
WHERE ARE WE HEADED?
SO,

JORDEC, INC.'S ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY.
TO THE MARINE RESOURCES RESEARCH CORP, FERRET'S EMPLOYER.
TO ITS R&D FACILITIES.
THE ADVENTURES OF MASATO AND THE OTHERS START FROM THIS MYSTERIOUS FACILITY!
THE SINIGLAW LAB.
TO BE CONTINUED

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